

Sand's 'Consuelo,' And who can deny the evidence of keen political insight, lofty ideas, and pure morality in the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft, Frances Wright, and George Eliot ?" People still read "Consuelo," even as they read "Les Trois Mousquetaires." They also read "Les Contemplations" and even dip into "Le G-dnie du Christianisme." They ostracise none of the great writers because there was error in their lives. Besides, it must be acknowledged as true that a counsel of perfection, or what we regard as perfection from our social standpoint, may well come from the imperfect. In fact it could not be otherwise, since we are all imperfect in one or another way.

Thus to reject Zola's "books and his teaching on the ground that there came a lapse in his life after fifty years of strenuous endeavour would be ridiculous, for it would entail the rejection of hundreds of others. The subject may be dismissed, then, without further comment from the moral point of view. Undoubtedly it will always be a source of regret to Zola's friends that this happened, even though it satisfied the great craving of his life. In spite of all our knowledge of human imperfection we always try to picture an ideal being, and we sorrow when the flaw in our ideal is discovered, even though reason tells us that we ought to have been prepared for it.

That the occurrences referred to caused great perturbation in Zola's life goes without saying; and as, about

this time or
soon afterwards, some change appeared in his
writings, a
certain co-relation "between that change and
his domestic
troubles might he suspected. But beyond
what is apparent
in parts of *' Le Docteur Pascal," and much
later in " F6con-

¹ " Westminster Review," January, 1891, "Patriotism and
Chastity/'p. 2.